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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BRUSSELS 002263

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SUBJECT: THE U.S. - EU AGREEMENT ON SECURITY OF INFORMATION

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Classified By: USEU Pol-Mil Chief Jeremy Brenner for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) Summary. The US-EU Agreement on the Security of Information, signed April 30, 2007, offers an important new vehicle by which the US can inject its perspectives into the internal EU policy-making process and shape European strategic thinking. It can also be used to gain insights into EU internal planning. End summary.

12. (SBU) At the April 30 Summit, the United States and the European Union signed an Agreement on the Security of Information. This agreement will permit the exchange and sharing of classified information between the U.S. and the EU. First proposed in 2003 as one of a series of agreements sought by the European Union, it establishes equivalencies, procedures, and requirements for the protection of any information that is shared under this agreement. The EU has conveyed a note verbale agreeing to specific security arrangements and the agreement will take full effect upon US agreement.

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Gaining Insight into EU Thinking  
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13. (C/NF) This agreement provides for the exchange of information up to the Top Secret level. The European Union currently produces only about 200 documents a year that are classified Confidential or above. There are a considerable number of documents that are designated as EU "Restricted," to which the US has not previously had access. These include internal planning documents for missions under the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) and options papers for consideration by the Political and Security Committee (PSC). In many instances, Council Secretariat officials or Member State representatives have expressed a desire to share these documents with us, but they have been constrained by the regulations prohibiting such a release to non-EU members. We anticipate that this agreement will result in much greater insight and visibility into the internal EU policy-making process with increased opportunity for sharing the US perspective at early stages of policy development.

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New Opportunities for Shaping European Strategic Thinking  
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14. (C/NF) The agreement will also permit the strategic use of information in order to shape EU thinking. The most striking example of this was in 2005 when the EU appeared to be headed for a lifting of the arms embargo on China. A special,

detailed, briefing by Washington analysts was provided to several named senior individuals within the Council Secretariat giving the US view of developments within the

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Chinese military and their implications. The result was a 180 degree turn in EU policy, with the embargo remaining in effect and no serious efforts being made to revisit it. Because the security agreement was not yet in place, this briefing required an exhaustive clearance for a one-time sharing of information. No papers could be exchanged. Under the new agreement, such briefings will be possible on a wider range of issues with considerably broader impact. Iran might be one country-specific instance where greater targeted information exchange could foster a common US-EU strategic understanding and bolster cooperation that would further important US policy goals.

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Reaching a Common Strategic Understanding  
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15. (C) We anticipate that one of the first uses of this agreement will be to exchange "watch lists" of countries at risk of instability. The EU Joint Situation Center produces such a list, analogous to the list maintained by the US National Intelligence Council (NIC). In exchanging these lists, the US and the EU could arrive at a common assessment of the countries at greatest risk and begin a series of follow-up consultations designed to address the factors of instability and consider preventative measures or appropriate responses.

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Making the Case for Greater European Engagement  
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16. (C/NF) The targeted sharing of information will also help to bolster the case within the EU apparatus for greater EU engagement in a particular theater. As an illustrative example, a visiting US team was told recently by EU police training planners that the EU was unaware of any smuggling activity across the Lebanese-Syrian border. They pointed out that their assessment was based solely on open source information. US evidence or analysis related to the border situation would provide the police planners and civilian crisis management directorate with hard facts upon which they could build the political case for an EU border monitoring mission. This principle could be applied to any number of issues and areas, including the Middle East, the Balkans, Africa, Afghanistan, the Caucasus, and the Mediterranean, where the EU is active under its "European Neighborhood Policy." There are individual issues such as an embargo on arms sales to Venezuela, threat assessments for deployed EU missions in Gaza and the West Bank, and developments in Iran where we believe an exchange of detailed information could be especially valuable in assuring that we and the EU are operating on the basis of a shared strategic assessments,

17. (C/NF) Finally, beyond the internal policy documents, the agreement can be used to gain greater access to the wide range of analysis produced by the Situation Center. SITCEN papers often form the basis for policy discussions, and can be requested by Javier Solana as part of an initial assessment process for determining the feasibility of EU engagement in a particular crisis area.

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